AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended): A polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber, comprising:

a core;

a clad layer surrounding the core, the clad layer including a large number of thin holes extending along the axis of the fiber, the thin holes being arranged in a crystalline formation; and

an over clad layer surrounding the clad layer,

wherein the over clad layer has a marking portion for indicating a polarization plane to be maintained,

wherein polarization of light propagating through said core is maintained exclusively by said thin holes in said clad layer.

2. (Original): The polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber of claim 1, wherein the marking portion is made of a material having a refractive index different from that of the material of the over clad layer.

3. (Original): The polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber of claim 1, wherein the marking portion is a hole extending along the axis of the fiber.

Please add the following new claims:

4. (New): The polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber of claim 1, wherein said marking portion is spaced apart from said thin holes in said clad layer.

5. (New): The polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber of claim 4, wherein said marking portion is spaced apart from said clad layer.

6. (New): The polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber of claim 5, wherein said clad layer has a substantially circular cross section.

7. (New): The polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber of claim 3, wherein said working portion is a pair of opposing holes in said over clad layer spaced apart from said clad layer.

8. (New): The polarization-maintaining photonic crystal fiber of claim 3, wherein said working portion is a single hole in said over clad layer spaced apart from said clad layer.